WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. In an information providing system where a server provides content data stored therein to a data terminal equipment placed on an information users side for retrieving the content data through a communications network, said data terminal
5 equipment comprising:

an index retrieval part for retrieving index data indicating said content data;

an authentication part for authenticating said content data based on the index data retrieved by said index retrieval
10 part; and

a content retrieval part for retrieving said content data from said server only if said authentication part has confirmed authenticity of the said content data.

2. The data terminal equipment according to claim 1, wherein

said content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof,

5 said index data includes embedded data which is embedded with said locator as an electronic watermark and to which said content data is linked, and

said authentication part comprises:

an extraction part for extracting, as a watermark

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10   locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from

the embedded data included in the index data retrieved by said

index retrieval part,

a text locator extraction part for extracting, as

a text locator, a locator specified as being indicative of the

15   content data linking to the embedded data from the index data

retrieved by said index retrieval part if said extraction part

has successfully extracted the watermark locator,

a check part for determining whether the text

locator extracted by said text locator extraction part matches

20   with the watermark locator extracted by said extraction part, and

an authenticity confirmation part for confirming

the authenticity of said content data only if said check part

determines that the text locator matches with the watermark

locator.

3.   The data terminal equipment according to claim 1,

wherein

said content data is assigned a locator indicating

information for specifying a storage location thereof,

5   said index data includes embedded data embedded with

said locator as an electronic watermark, and

said authentication part comprises:

an extraction part for extracting, as a watermark

locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from

10   the embedded data included in the index data retrieved by said

index retrieval part, and

an authenticity confirmation part for confirming

the authenticity of said content data if said extraction part has

successfully extracted the watermark locator.

4.   The data terminal equipment according to claim 1,

further comprising:

a display part for displaying a predetermined

warning if said authentication part has not confirmed the

5   authenticity of said content data.

5.   The data terminal equipment according to claim 2

or 3, wherein

said embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio

data.

6.   In an information providing system where a server

provides content data stored therein to a data terminal equipment

placed on an information user side through a communications

network, a method of retrieving the content data by said data

5   terminal equipment, said method comprising:

a step of retrieving index data indicating said content

data;

a step of authenticating said content data based on the

index data retrieved in said index retrieving step; and

10   a step of retrieving said content data from said server

only if authenticity of the said content data has been confirmed

in authenticating step.

7.   The data retrieval method according to claim 6,

wherein,

said content data is assigned a locator indicating

information for specifying a storage location thereof,

5   said index data includes embedded data which is

embedded with said locator as an electronic watermark and to which

said content data is linked, and

said authenticating step further comprises:

a step of extracting, as a watermark locator, the

10   locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded

data included in the index data retrieved in said index retrieving

step,

a step of extracting, as a text locator, a locator

specified as being indicative of the content data linking to the

15   embedded data from the index data retrieved in said index

retrieving step if the watermark locator has been successfully

extracted in said extracting step,

a checking step of determining whether the text

locator extracted in said text locator extracting step matches

20   with the watermark locator extracted in said extracting step, and

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a step of authenticating said content data only if it is determined in said checking step that the text locator matches with the watermark locator.

8. The data retrieval method according to claim 6, wherein,

said content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof,

5   said index data includes embedded data embedded with said locator as an electronic watermark, and

said authenticating step further comprises:

a step of extracting, as a watermark locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded

10   data included in the index data retrieved in said index retrieving step, and

a step of confirming the authenticity of said content data if the watermark locator has been successfully extracted in said extracting step.

9. The data retrieval method according to claim 6, further comprising

a step of displaying a predetermined warning if the authenticity of said content data has not been confirmed in said

5   authenticating step.

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10. The data retrieval method according to claim 7 or 8, wherein

said embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio data.

11. A recording medium having a program stored therein, said program for retrieving content data by a data terminal equipment placed on an information user side in an information providing system in which a server provides the content data

5 stored therein through a communications network, said program comprising:

a step of retrieving index data indicating said content data;

a step of authenticating said content data based on the

10 index data retrieved in said index retrieving step; and

a step of retrieving said content data from said server only if authenticity of the said content data has been confirmed in said authenticating step.

12. The recording medium according to claim 11, wherein

said content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof,

5 said index data includes embedded data which is embedded with said locator as an electronic watermark and to which

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said content data is linked, and

said authenticating step further comprises:

a step of extracting, as a watermark locator, the
10   locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded

data included in the index data retrieved in said index retrieving

step,

a step of extracting, as a text locator, a locator

specified as being indicative of the content data linking to the
15   embedded data from the index data retrieved in said index

retrieving step if the watermark locator has been successfully

extracted in said extracting step,

a checking step of determining whether the text

locator extracted in said text locator extracting step matches
20   with the watermark locator extracted in said extracting step, and

a step of authenticating said content data only if

it is determined in said checking step that the text locator

matches with the watermark locator.

13.   The recording medium according to claim 11,
wherein

said content data is assigned a locator indicating

information for specifying a storage location thereof,

5   said index data includes embedded data that is embedded

with said locator as an electronic watermark, and

said authenticating step further comprises:

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a step of extracting, as a watermark locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded data included in the index data retrieved in said index retrieving step, and

a step of confirming the authenticity of said content data if the watermark locator has been successfully extracted in said extracting step.

14. The recording medium according to claim 11, wherein

said program further comprises:

a step of displaying a predetermined warning if the authenticity of said content data has not been confirmed in said authenticating step.

15. The recording medium according to claim 12 or 13, wherein

said embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio data.

16. A program for retrieving content data by a data terminal equipment placed on an information user side in an information providing system in which a server provides the content data stored therein through a communications network, said program comprising:

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a step of retrieving index data indicating said content data;

a step of authenticating said content data based on the index data retrieved in said index retrieving step; and

10   a step of retrieving said content data from said server only if authenticity of the said content data has been confirmed in authenticating step.

17. The program according to claim 16, wherein

said content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof,

said index data includes embedded data embedded with

5 said locator as an electronic watermark and linked to said content data, and

said authenticating step further comprises:

a step of extracting, as a watermark locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded

10 data included in the index data retrieved said index retrieving step,

a step of extracting, as a text locator, a locator specified as being indicative of the content data linking to the embedded data from the index data retrieved in said index

15 retrieving step if the watermark locator has been successfully extracted in said extracting step,

a checking step of determining whether the text

locator extracted in said text locator extracting step matches

with the watermark locator extracted in said extracting step, and

20   a step of authenticating said content data only if

it is determined in said checking step that the text locator

matches with the watermark locator.

          18. The program according to claim 16, wherein

          said content data is assigned a locator indicating

information for specifying a storage location thereof,

          said index data includes embedded data embedded with

5   said locator as an electronic watermark, and

          said authenticating step further comprises:

          a step of extracting, as a watermark locator, the

locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded

data included in the index data retrieved said index retrieving

10   step, and

          a step of confirming the authenticity of said

content data if the watermark locator has been successfully

extracted in said extracting step.

          19. The program according to claim 16, further

comprising

          a step of displaying a predetermined warning if the

authenticity of said content data has not been confirmed in said

5   authenticating step.

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20. The program according to claim 17 or 18, wherein said embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio data.